/66 cont'd/

795 Since Taoism has a great influence upon the lives of the Miao,
793 the Taoist priests therefore assume great importance in Miao society. Furthermore, only a man with the qualifications of a Taoist priest has the opportunity to read the classics and receive an education, and thus to acquire specialized knowledge. Consequently, Taoist
534 priests enjoy a higher social status than an ordinary person and with it, many special privileges. Under such circumstances, all families, except those under very poor economic conditions, (the initiation ceremony costs money) always send their sons to be initiated for the Taoist priesthood. The fact that the above-mentioned unweaned child was carried there by his mother shows how anxious the parents are to have their children initiated. /67/

776 2. Names of the Important Gods

There are many gods which are worshiped by the Miao. According to what they told me, the most important gods are the following:

(a) Yü-huang—the greatest god in heaven;
(b) T'u-ti-kung—the greatest god on earth;
(c) Ching-chü-kung—the greatest mountain god;
(d) Hai-lung-wang—the greatest water god.

3. Traces of Totem Worship

771 According to Miao legend, which will be discussed in the next
789 chapter, the dog was their first ancestor; that was their totem.
825 Traces of totem worship still remain in their everyday life. Though
[262] there are dogs in every family, yet they have never killed them for food. They let the dogs die a natural death, or they trade the dogs with the Li people for other commodities. I have observed this kind of transaction. This apparently derives from the old custom
[784] of the totemic society, i.e. "to kill totem animals is taboo." Furthermore, the fact that the seal of the military Taoists was inscribed with an outline of a dog might also have some significance here, which is worth noting. /68/

M /20 cont./
*101 After the animal is fattened, an appointment is made with other
CC bull owners in neighboring villages for a bull fight out in the
563 open. Victory is a good omen. An auspicious day is selected
M [782] to kill the bull for sacrifice to the ancestors. The sacrificer
[541] wears white clothes and a green outer garment. After the
[787] sacrifice the clan members sit around in a circle to drink
[292] heavily and to sing in a most joyful way. Today this custom
[769] is still prevalent in this sub-prefecture.
[273] (10) Chiu Ku Miao. — They originally came from Shih-
[167] p'ing and K'ai-li in Kweichow. It is of the same tribe as the
[291] P'ien-t'ou-he. They prefer green clothes. They are especially
[714] fierce in nature. They wear armor and carry knives. They
[411] go up mountains as if flying, and draw strong bows called the
[648] p'ien-chia. The Tung Mao people who are being taxed by the Yung Shun Pacification Commission were this tribe. They repeatedly caused trouble in Chen-ch'i-so before being put under governmental administration.

M (11) He Shan Miao. — They are found in T'ai-kung,
[302] Kweichow. They bind their hair with blue cotton and live in
[787] secluded valleys. They divine with rushes to know what is
[648] auspicious or inauspicious. During the rebellion of 1795 in the reign of Ch'ien Lung many members of this tribe joined it, and many of them were killed at Kou-pai-yen by Fu Chuang-su /the commander of the government forces/.

M (12) He Chio Miao. — They are very numerous at Ch'ing-
[291] chiang and T'ai-kung. They wear short garments and large
[411] trousers, and going and coming they carry knives and daggers.
[787] Before taking any action they put two snails in a dish, to watch
[825] their fight in order to divine whether the omen is good or bad. In the twenty-fifth year /1686/ of the reign of K'ang-hsi, with the Hung Miao, Shih Lao-ch'ung occupied T'ien-hsing-chai, but was subdued by Kuo Chung-hsiao. Today, remnants of this group can be found at Lao-feng-shan.

M (13) Ch'e Chai Miao. Originally they were from Li-p'ing
[167] and Ku-chou in Kweichow. Today, their people are still found

249 /67 cont./
harvested. After harvest the canes are tied up, 50 to a bundle,
249 and stored in earth pits about one kung ch'ih deep. The pits
251 are first lined with cane leaves, on which the sugar cane are
laid in rows. More leaves are laid on top and then covered
with dirt. Ventilation tubes are stuck in to ensure a free flow
of air in order to prevent decay. On market day, the canes
[843] are carried to market for sale.

The Miao area also produces native tobacco. Beginning
249 with the tenth and eleventh months the Miao nurse tobacco
[343] seedlings. Above the seedbed a thatched shelter with a slant-
ing roof is erected to protect the seedlings from frost and snow.
After they sprout they are watered and fertilized with ashes,
manure, or tung paste. Transplanting takes place in the follow-
ing spring in the third and fourth months. Fields for tobacco
cultivation have to be plowed very early to reduce insect pests,
[825] according to the Miao. The insect called t'u ch'a erh only eats
tobacco plant roots. Tobacco seedlings are transplanted in
rows, by first crushing the earth into powder by hand, then
burying the roots of the seedling in the earth and pressing the
earth tight around the plant. If the earth is dry, then it should
be watered at the root and the stem. After three or five days
some mild fertilizer may be applied. Insect pests are the worst
enemy of tobacco. Besides the t'u ch'a erh, which eats the
[825] roots, green hoppers eat the leaves. So, in tobacco growing
a great deal of labor is spent in catching insects, which has to
be done in the early morning, for later the t'u ch'a erh dig
through the earth and it is difficult to find them. The tobacco
plant is never allowed to grow too high, and has to be clipped
from time to time to ensure the growth of more full and firm
leaves. During harvest time the tobacco leaves are cut down
leaf by leaf, /Illustration 36 on p. 68/ /69/ and stacked up for
one or two nights. Then they are tied up with straw ropes and
hung up to dry in the sun, being taken indoors at night. If a
good color is wanted, then in good weather they should be ex-
posed outside overnight to absorb the dew. The resulting color
will be a beautiful, golden yellow.

/69 cont./

245 Among the pine trees produced in the Miao area, there is a red pine which has firm and glossy wood that does not rot when put in the earth for a long time. A good one has the quality of ox horn, is bright red, good for making implements, good-looking and durable. Also grey pine (Illus. 35) is produced, suitable for beams. Other products like mulberry, hemp
248 (Illus. 37), and cotton also are produced in quantity, and are important economic plants.

226 Fishing and animal husbandry. — The Miao like to eat
[262] sour fish, so they have a number of ways of raising and catching
[231] fish. To raise fish, pools in ravines are made into ponds, and
[439] fry are bought from the Chinese to raise, particularly of huan and lien /a kind of bream/. Also, in low-lying rice fields they place a bamboo wattle fence to stop up the place where the field water goes out (Illus. 38), to keep the fish from flowing out. A great many common fish are raised in these fields. To catch fish they use nets, hooks, and poison. Fishing nets are cast anywhere at will in streams and rivers during the day. At night nets are put down in fast-flowing water along the enbankments, on sand bars, at springs, and in shallow ponds. Also, they mix eggs with cooked rice and fry it in vegetable oil, and throw the rice in such places as still shallow water on a sand bar or in shallow ponds. Fish are said to be attracted by the smell of the food and come to gather at these places. Markers are set out in the daytime, and at night they come to these spots to cast their nets. The amount of the catch from these places is larger than elsewhere. They use a small bamboo
[227] pole for a fishing rod, and a line twisted from horsetail hair.
[171] The hook and the buoy are the same as those used by the Chi-
[825] nese, and they also use such bugs as earthworms, centipedes, and spiders for bait. In the winter season the fish tend to remain
[227] at the bottom of the water, and therefore they attach tiny pieces of lead to the line to make the hook sink down below. In the spring season when the weather gets warmer, fish become more active and swim to the surface; they therefore attach a piece of wood or twig halfway down the line to prevent the hook

/98 cont./

587 [589] [836] [765] A widow has freedom of sexual intercourse. There is no definite period of mourning for her deceased husband and she may remarry at any time, except that she must have the approval of the brothers of the deceased husband. If either the elder or the younger brother of the deceased wishes to marry the widowed sister-in-law, then she may not marry an outsider. Otherwise she returns to her family to marry again. At the time of the second marriage a sorcerer priest is also asked to perform the ritual. There is no go-between nor a formally set date. At the wedding the "shame-covering parasol" must be opened fully. On reaching her new husband's home she enters by the front entrance. /99/ A widow may marry again and again. Furthermore, she can have a husband marry into her household.

(3) Birth

842 [782] 843 844 Despite the hard life of the Miao, the desire for sons is very strong with both rich and poor. When a Miao man has no son at middle age he must pray to the gods and make a vow, for the early birth of a son. A pregnant Miao woman keeps on working. At the time of delivery, they use a bamboo sifter placed on the ground, lined with cotton wadding on which is placed a layer of ragged garments. The woman stands with her legs apart, the body slightly bending, her two hands gripping the side of a bed or a bench. If she happens to be working on a mountainside and does not have time to get back home, then she chooses a place under the shade of a tree where she can easily get a grip. If the newborn child does not cry, she digs [825] out a blood clot from its mouth, or sometimes she keeps a cat ready on the side, and hits it to make it meow so as to startle 845 the infant awake. In case of complicated childbirth, an experienced old woman in the village is asked to help extract the child with the hands. Should an infant die in the womb, it is taken out with a hook, or sometimes a sorcerer priest is

/143 cont./

(6) Sacrifice to the Kuei of Pimples

When a Miao, whether a man or a woman, gets a pimple on his foot or leg which does not heal for a long time, it is considered that the [nɑŋ¹ ŋuei¹ pi¹nu¹] and [nɑŋ¹ nu¹ pi¹ ʂɛ¹] are causing it. Then it is necessary to ask a sorcerer-priest to sacrifice to the kuei during the daytime in the main house, with five bowls of wine and five bowls of meat, /144/ and three slender sticks of incense. In the Miao language this is called /pɑ¹ pi¹ nu¹/. The sorcerer-priest holds the chiao-tzu in the right hand, and the words of the incantation he utters merely implores the kuei to bring about recovery.

In divination with chiao-tzu the yang chiao and yin chiao indicate misfortune; the sheng chiao indicates good fortune. If it turns up yang or yin chiao, it is necessary to repeat the incantation and divine again. As soon as the sheng chiao turns up, the paper can be burned to send away the kuei.

(7) Ta Kan Lo

Ta Kan Lo is called [ta¹ kan¹ lo¹ t'ɑ¹ lie¹] in the Miao language. When a Miao at home happens to have a rat urinate on him, or a hen suddenly crows or produces a soft-shelled egg; or when on going out he sees uphill two snakes together; or when walking a bird urinates on his head, these various phenomena encountered are all regarded as bad omens by the Miao. Then they ask for a diviner's calculation, without telling directly about the strange occurrence that has been witnessed. If what the diviner finds out corresponds with what one has seen, then the sorcerer-priest must be asked to perform Ta Kan Lo /Beating the Kan-Lo/. Each performance, not counting preparation, takes about half a day, from early morning till noon. The ceremony is divided into four parts as follows:

/146 cont./

*782 mountain, behind is the slope; in front are soldiers, behind is the general. Up the hill is a path; down the stream is a boat. Each word and each phrase is to be listened to. Being in the same place, any time I may call your name. The host is sitting at peace, not going to the fields to swear oaths. At the temple he does not swear oaths, nor at home. He does not swear oaths with cold water, and when beating his wife /and children ?/ does not swear oaths. The host is willing to feed others, and does not take advantage of others, nor laugh at other people's sons and descendants. He does not act unjustly, but observes litigations all around him."

At this point he once more burns beeswax, makes a gesture of leading down the Kuei. His incantation continues:

"If the ta kan lo paper banners and their staffs become disarranged, we ask the kan lo kuei to please set them right. These are the strange occurrences caused by the kan lo kuei: the pig goes mad; the dog jumped on the roof; the pig ran up to the entrance; the hen entered her nest to eat her egg; the pig went up the stairs to eat a small child; the hen can crow like a cock; the cock can hatch chickens; the hen laid a soft-shelled egg; the bitch had only one puppy; the pig had a litter of two piglets; the crops ripened in the third month; a dead thing was seen when coming out the entrance; two snakes were seen together; two tigers hid in the house; a rat made a squeaking sound; a snake was seen in the house; a snake shed its skin in the house. The host had a terrible dream, dreaming he was in rain and snow, dreaming he was in the midst of a deep forest. He therefore went to the diviner. It was found that no other kuei was causing these calamities, only the kan lo

*782 787 • 825

*782 796

/151 cont./

*782 783 sorcer-priest holds the chiao and rings the bell, standing in front of the table, and the words of the incantation he utters are to the following effect:

[769] "Now we have prepared well wine, meat, a cock, pa-pa, tofu, green cloth, clean water, and ready money to cleanse the house. First we invoke the ancestors of the host. When you hear my call, please hurry down and receive the objects of sacrifice. Next we invoke the ancestors of the previous tenant. The host, fearing that he may not be at peace here, has asked me to come to cleanse the house. I have come with many soldiers and horses. With water I cleanse the house, first cleanse the fire bed, next the fire pit. I cleanse the right and the left of the house; I cleanse the front and the back doors. After I have cleansed three times, the host may live in it with great prosperity, resources abundant, prosperous harvests of the five grains, and the increase of the six kinds of domestic animals. The trouble-making kuei have now been sent out the door, hereafter peace will be everlasting."

[787] After the incantation has been completed, he then divines with the chiao. If either the yang chiao or the sheng chiao appears, it is auspicious, and paper is burned to send off the kuei. But if the yin chiao appears, then the incantation has to be said again, until he divines and gets either the yang chiao or the sheng chiao, when it is the end. After the sorcerer-priest has completed his performance, he drinks the wine on the table and takes the cock, meat, pa-pa, tofu, green cloth, and copper yuan offered in sacrifice to the kuei, home with him.

[152/ (10) Cleansing the Cat

•[825] The Miao consider that a cat dying in the house is an ill omen, and it is then necessary to ask a sorcerer-priest to purify the house in order to expel harmful emanations. In Miao this is called

/152 cont./

*782 [t'ai wa -mang]. The kuei sacrificed to are [kueiy mang
783 jeng xiang] and [kueiy mang jeng qiangl]. The time is in broad
•825 daylight and the place is anywhere in the main house; it is only
[776] necessary to face out the door. A table is used on which are placed five bowls each of wine and meat, placed in two rows. The beeswax is not used. The sorcerer-priest holds the chiao in his right hand and utters words of an incantation, which say in general:

> "The reason for sacrificing to the kuei is because a cat died in the house. Since the cat died in the house, the host dares not sit down in this house to eat food for fear that he may get sick after eating; he dares not live in this house for fear that he will not prosper. Therefore, I request the kuei to come to drive the dead cat away."

[787] After the incantation he divines with the chiao. The yin chiao or the sheng chiao indicates that the kuei of the cat has already gone; if he gets the yang chiao, then the kuei still remains in house. Then the incantation has to be started all over again until the divination shows that the cat kuei is gone, whereupon the paper money may be burned to send off the kuei.

(11) Drinking Blood

*782 When two Miao become involved in a dispute about some
627 matter or wrangle about property, and who is right and who is
[578] wrong is not clear, or if a man meets a false accusation in which he cannot clear himself, then they resort to drinking blood and taking an oath, which in the Miao language is called [ji ti
[778] nieng]. For minor matters it is done at the village shrine
[774] for the local divinity of the soil but for important matters it is necessary to go to the T'ien Wang ["Heavenly King temple"](1) to drink blood.

1. See "Sacrifice to T'ien Wang."

/152 cont./

*782 627 [825] to drink blood. They may be treated separately as follows:

A. Drinking at the shrine of the local divinity of the soil.

Drinking blood at the local shrine is also called "drinking chicken blood." During the day or at night they prepare a cock and some paper money. First they kill the cock, and its blood is allowed to drip into wine. This is then carried to the local shrine and offered to the kuei. The names of the kuei are [nang nea [776] xiry bu] and [nang mat ji7 teng]. A Miao sorcerer is asked to utter an incantation to the following effect:

> "This sorcerer-priest has arrived at a forked road and cannot think how to decide. Formerly, without any business I dared not recklessly mention the local kuei's names, but today these two parties are involved in a dispute over land boundaries, each insisting on his version of the case, and not able to reach a settlement. Therefore, we have made /153/ this bowl of chicken [825] blood, and the two sides have come before the kuei to drink blood and take a vow. After the drinking, then a settlement will result."

At this point the parties of the dispute each has a swallow of blood. The sorcer-priest burns paper and continues the incantation:

> "The wrong party after drinking this blood will then die, dying nine times and becoming nine times extinct."

After the incantation, they disperse. The cock is taken by the sorcerer-priest, to whom each side also has to give one or two, three or four, strings of cash. There being no set number.

B. Drinking blood in the T'ien Wang Temple.

[825] Drinking blood at the T'ien Wang temple is also called "drinking cat's blood," because it is necessary to stab a cat, and its blood is dripped into wine to drink to make a vow. When drinking blood at the T'ien Wang temple, one must have a witness, who is called the "blood supervisor." There are many designations for blood drinking, and there are three kinds, drinking one tube of blood, two tubes of blood, and three tubes of blood. Because there are many cases, the number of occasions for drinking blood also are numerous. There is also substitute blood drinking, when the witness or a relative of one of the parties may be allowed

/158 cont./

After the incantation paper is burned to send off the kuei.

2. The Guest Religion

(1) The Local Divinity of the Soil

In every Miao village there is a shrine for the local divinity of the soil, built of stone slabs and rocks. It is said that during the divinity's lifetime he was good at divination and his disciples were numerous. When people planned to build houses or shrines, generally they asked him to select auspicious dates. Spending his whole life divining for others, it was inevitable that some of the days he selected turned out to be unlucky days. He tried to select a lucky day for himself to build his own house, but up till his death he was unsuccessful. At the time of his death he was without a house, and he died under the stone slabs. He said to the villagers while dying: "When you offer sacrifices to me, any day will do, except the anniversary of the death of Duke Yang." People remembered his virtue and felt sorry that he was without a house. So they built a low house as his shrine. (Illus. 68).

/159//Illus. 68 appears here./ The Miao believe that the local divinity is the shen in charge of wild animals, and by sacrificing to him they can avoid attacks from wild beasts. Every year on the second day of the second and eighth months all the villagers join together in sacrifice to the local divinity. The offering consists of two cups of wine, a big slice of pork placed in a bowl, on which they put a little salt, a pair of chopsticks, and a certain amount of incense and paper--all arranged on the ground before his shrine. Inside the shrine are lighted a pair of candles and three sticks of incense. Another stick of incense is stuck in the ground behind the sorcerer-priest. Wearing ordinary clothes, and waving a knife in his left hand and holding a pair of chiao-tzu in his right hand, he stands facing the shrine. He utters an incantation, divines with the

/200 cont./

754 of them must learn this art. But the secret is not necessarily
[428] handed down to one's own daughter — other girls may also be taught. If a girl is learning sewing or singing from a ku woman, and the latter thinks that she can be taught the art of ku, she inadvertently says to the girl, "You have got it!" This girl will then get sick. In order to get well, she has to learn the art from the woman. The details of the ritual and incantations used in imparting this knowledge could not be found out. The
[178] ku woman maintains a ku altar, hidden in the house or in a
173 mountain cave. It is said that once a certain ku woman main-
754 tained an altar at home. One day after breakfast when all the villagers had gone up the mountain to work, the woman shut her door and heated warm water to bathe the images. Inadvertently, a little boy saw her. The next day when the ku woman went up the mountain to work, the boy imitated her, heating water to wash the images, scalding the ku images to death. One of them bore the soul of the woman. While working on the mountain, the woman suddenly became conscious of what was happening. She went home to change her clothes, then died. The eyes of a ku woman are red. If she
754 does not send out the ku, she gets sick herself, and her face turns yellow. When the ku victimizes a person, the woman is protected from sickness for three years; when it victimizes an ox she is protected for one year; when it victimizes a tree, she
[82] is protected for three months. A pig may be victimized, but
[262] not a dog, and so the ku woman is afraid of dogs and does not eat dog meat. The symptoms of a victim of ku are yellow
[753] complexion, desire for food but inability to eat it, and a swollen stomach. Immediate medical attention can help re-
683 covery. In 1928 there was a case of ku poisoning at Feng-
754 huang, involving a Miao whose two sons died in succession. He suspected that a ku woman in the same village was the cause. The authorities were petitioned to search her house, where there was found hidden an earthen jar containing snakes, tortoises, toads, and so on, as well as cut-out paper images of human forms. The evidence was conclusive, and the ku woman was shot.

[167 cont.]

684 The adulterous wife usually is repudiated and her parents must
586 refund the dowry. The betrayed husband has the right to kill his wife and even her accomplice. This right is almost never exercised.

N. B. — We have said above (paragraph relative to the general
548 character of the "Méo" that many "Méo" young women were of rather
778 easy virtue and even examples of prostitution are cited without the slightest dishonor to those engaged in it. All Europeans who have passed through Dongvan or have lived there for a while, are familiar with the famous "sacred wood" located within a few hundred meters of the post (it may be seen in the background of photo 467, Plate 41). This wood, of small extent, is situated between two hills. There are very fine trees, several groups of rather picturesque rocks, and it encloses the ruins of an ancient pagoda.

When a European goes for a walk in this wood, one may soon
548 see descending from the neighboring hillsides where they are working, several young "Méo" women coming to offer the stroller their smiles and ... all the rest. It is only just to add, however, that the nymphs of the "sacred wood" of Dongvan do not always belong to the "Méo" group and that they also include young "Lolo" women (of the kind photo 465, Plate 30 shows).

764 The respect and worship of the dead are not as rigorously ob-
[769] served among the "Méo" as in the other groups. The funerals, like the other great events of life — births and marriages — are scarcely more than occasions for drinking and feasting.

The corpse, dressed in his best clothes, is fastened standing upright against one of the walls of the hall of honor, where relatives, neighbors, and friends are gathered together. For three days the feasts and the dances alternate without interruption. The deceased is invited to share in the meals and often small pieces of meat are placed in his mouth. In certain tribes, a dog is killed, which then
[825] is fastened to the hand of the deceased by means of a paper ribbon. This dog is charged with guiding the steps of his master on the pathways of the other life.

The site of the grave designated by the priest-sorcerer, the corpse is carried on a stretcher to the place of burial. When a coffin is built, the placing of the body in the bier is done at the last moment, at [168] the edge of the trench, as soon as it is dug. The cortège,

/86 cont./

A M 145 125 532 [153] The self-criticism that the children exhibit even at an early age was surprising. Some Akha children about ten years old repeatedly refused to draw because "their lines did not look like the things they wanted to draw." In contrast, the really primitive people, the Phi Tong Luang (1), behaved quite

1. Bernatzik, IV, pp. 174 ff.

differently. Here even the adults scribbled for hours and then explained to me circumstantially what the lines, which in no instance went beyond the scribbling stage, were supposed to mean.

In conclusion it should be said that neither among the Meau nor the Akha did the talent for drawing disappear at a certain age, as we often find among European children (see also the chapter, "Art," the section on "Painting, Sculpture, Ornamentation," and the chapter, "Talent, Knowledge, Character, Morality, and Manners").

/87/ d) Sexual Development

A M 836 Among the Meau as well as among the Akha, unmarried young people enjoy extensive sexual freedom, which is documented by other authors for the Meau of other regions as well (1).

1. Eberhard II, pp. 253, 255, 256, 258, 261; also Chin. Repos., 14, p. 110.

M 864 [513] The children of the Meau, separated according to sex, sleep in their own sleeping quarters or at least in their own beds; only the small children sleep with their mothers. They therefore have no opportunity to gather experience by observing the adults. If they occasionally ask questions of a sexual nature, the adults answer truthfully, provided that the M [825] children are somewhat bigger. Small children, however, are

/87 cont./

M 864 [825] told that the gibbons and monkeys, which animate the primeval forest in the neighborhood of the villages, put the babies in the laps of the women. Thus, among the Meau, the apes occupy the position of our stork. The explanation of the facts of life is given to the children of the Meau at the time of puberty at the latest.

A M 838 839 Onanism, homosexuality, and other sexual perversions are not found among either the Akha or the Meau. In most instances I did not even succeed in explaining these concepts to my informants, but when I did, they indignantly denied their occurrence, pointing out that the ancestors and spirits would prevent such perversions.

A M 836 626 [835] [831] Within the incest prohibitions, which apply not only to marriage, but also to free love (see the section, "Marriage Obstacles and Regulations," in this chapter) and are strictly observed, since a violation, according to the belief of the natives, would be immediately punished by the ancestors and spirits, the choice of a partner is completely free for the young men, whereas public opinion, but not the young men themselves, demands chastity of the girl. In practice, however, the demands of public opinion only result in secrecy, by boys as well as girls, about everything that is connected with sexual life.

A M 836 [832] [833] In the case of younger boys, the older girls take the initiative by flirtation, at which they are masterfully adept. It often happens that a girl who teaches a young boy /88/ the arts of love-making later on becomes his chief wife, since she most likely will become pregnant. Older boys, on the other hand, often assume the training of the young girls. We frequently had an opportunity to observe an open flirtation. My M 892 883 123 wife wrote about one such observation in her journal: "May, the chief's daughter, is probably about sixteen years old and is a typical 'teen-ager' in behavior. She giggles at the least thing or bursts into loud peals of laughter over a remark shouted at her by one of the boys. It is loudest, however, when several girls are assembled. They chatter and laugh so loudly and unrestrainedly, even when we are working nearby, that we are

/117 cont./

764 former times. No gifts are added to the coffin. The grave is now closed again with stones and earth; sometimes a mound is formed, sometimes it remains flat. It also happens that a simple fence is erected around the grave site or the grave mound. Often the grave is also covered with leaves which are weighted down with sticks and stones. This is supposed to be [825] the most effective way to prevent wild animals from digging up the corpse. If the location of the grave is to be kept secret, the earth which remains after the grave is closed is scattered, and in a few hours nothing remains to suggest a burial site. [766] In no case, not even in connection with the death of prominent Meau, are forked posts or megaliths erected.

764 After the burial a sacrifice is offered. In the case of a 782 poor man, pigs or merely chickens are slaughtered without [556] much ceremony or ado. If he were a rich man, however, the [533] sacrifice consists of an ox or a buffalo. Even during the [775] slaughtering, the playing of the mouth organs, the gongs, and, if such are available, the drums begins and continues uninterruptedly until the meat of the sacrificial animal is completely cut up and the soul of the deceased has been invited to enjoy itself. This is followed by dancing to the mouth organs, which ends the funeral. During the following three days additional sacrifices are offered to the soul of the deceased by [775] putting food on the grave, since it is assumed that during this period it stays in the vicinity of the grave (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," the section "Ideas about Death and the Soul").

[766] The manner of burial is basically the same for men, [554] women, and children, with no differences other than that the sacrifices characterize the social rank of the deceased. Moreover, depending on the rank of the deceased, more or fewer 764 mourners appear. Abadie (1) confirms this and describes the 766 177

1. Page 168.

burial of a very distinguished Meau chief, which, he says, was just as simple as that of a humble man, except for the coffin for which, following the Chinese custom, a non-rotting, petrified wood was used.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/120/

M 764 [114] [789] Savina (1) reports briefly and likewise somewhat differ-

1. II, p. 229.

ently on the burial customs of the Meau: "As soon as someone has died, the drum is beaten and guns fired in order to drive away the evil spirits. People come to the house, bemoan the dead, and begin to drink liquor and to eat meat. On the third day the deceased is buried under the supervision of a shaman. M [787] [775] [825] The latter tosses a chicken into the air and sees from its fluttering which way the soul will go. The grave is made, about a meter deep, where it falls. The coffin is a hollowed-out tree trunk. A small mound is made on the grave with a few stones."

A 764 628 [203] [765] The burial customs of the Akha are similar at some points to those of the Meau. As among the latter, among the Akha, too, the guests from the surrounding villages are invited to the funeral by messengers. Until their arrival all work ceases in the mourning village; no one leaves the village, and moreover, as a sign of mourning, even the inhabitants of those villages from which a number of persons have set out for the funeral as mourners retire into their houses.

A 764 Among the Akha the deceased is washed and, attired in his best clothing and silver ornaments, is laid out on a sleeping mat, over which is put a new white cotton cloth. The corpse is put on its back, and, while it is still warm, the toes and hands are tied so that when rigor mortis sets in the limbs will remain in the desired position. It is seen to that the arms of the corpse are stretched out and that the palms of the hands remain turned toward each other. Members of the family, friends, and, in the case of distinguished men, many village inhabitants, squat beside the corpse and around the house of the dead and maintain the deathwatch day and night and utter the lament for the dead. The members of the family go from one to the other of those present, in order to serve everyone.

/161 cont./

775 [761] not died. This information strongly suggests a knowledge of apparent death. While the corpse is rotting in the grave, the soul keeps the shape of the deceased. Nevertheless the souls are not feared, not even those of powerful chiefs or shamans, as long as they belong to the sib. Since they know no abode other than that of ordinary men and women, there is no realm of souls.

775 787 Only in dreams does a dead person appear to a living one. Such appearances are impossible in the waking state and are not limited to seasons or times of day. The appearance of a dead person means only that the soul is hungry and in need of sacrifices, which are then quickly offered.

614 775 776 825 In general, the souls of the dead of alien sibs are not feared either. There is one exception, however. During the three days after interment when every soul remains unprotected, so to speak, in the neighborhood of the grave, it may happen that it is dragged into the jungle by evil spirits and is transformed there into a man-eating tiger. If such a tiger is shot, evil spirits take the soul with them. In time it turns into an evil spirit which causes harm. Such evil spirits are dangerous for people who do not belong to the sib, and only for them. If the track of a tiger shows five toes instead of the customary four, it is a magic soul-tiger.

775 825 [648] Tales of this sort have also reached the valley-dwelling neighbors of the Meau, who now have considerable fear of the Meau. Lajonquière (1), for instance, writes: "that the Thai say

1. II, p. 312.

of the Meau that they do not have to be afraid of tigers because they belong to the same family and can transform themselves into tigers in the evening." The Meau north of Nah have the [763] [177] notion that a tiger /162/ jumps against a house in which a person is in his death struggle. The tiger takes the soul, which is transformed into a tiger. This idea is undoubtedly foreign, probably of Laotian origin.

/162 cont./

M 774 825 Trees, rocks, and the like do not have a soul, but some animals do, such as some tigers, but also dogs, which will be discussed in the section, "Deities and Spirits," in this chapter.

M 775 614 The souls of the ancestors exert an influence upon the lives of their descendants. They protect them against evil spirits, help wherever they can, as in case of sicknesses, which are usually caused by evil spirits, and promote the growth of field products and the well-being of domestic animals. Their most important function, however, is their concern for the perpetuation of the sib. They do this by inducing the spirit which is next in the succession of deaths to let itself be reborn as a child. There is a striking contradiction in the fact that, on the one hand, the ancestors are regarded as helpful spirits, while, on the other hand, they are reborn. Under normal circumstances the members of a sib multiply, so that more children are born than individuals of the sib die. If the ancestors are reborn in the children, the lack of further ancestors would bring about a cessation of births, or some of the children born would have to come into the world without souls. Moreover, if all the ancestors were reborn as babies, no one would remain to carry out the important functions of ancestors. I explained my doubts to various informants. Each one answered without further deliberation that there were many more ancestors from former times than could ever be reborn, for in ancient times the Meau were much more numerous than they are today. I had no reply to this logic.

A 761 Like the Meau, the Akha regard sickness as a cause of death, but they also view old age and not least the effects of black magic as causes of death. The Akha, too, believe in a soul, ne, which likewise /163/ leaves the body during sleep in order to wander about. Therefore, dreams are the experiences of the soul, to which, consequently, special importance is attached. One therefore does not fail to visit the shaman to have the dream experience interpreted if such an occasion arises. In any case upon awakening one must see to it that the soul is

A 774 [828] [787] [756]

/166 cont./

776 The spirit of fire is called tă hŏ lŭ pĭn. It is his function
•825 to take care of the fire. He would feel offended if one were to
step over a fire, and he would take revenge in such a case by
[372] sending a tiger that would devour the perpetrator. Telford (1)
[626]
[171]

Page 133.

reports that the Meau and the Yau in western China, in the region of Tschieng /167/ Hung in Yunnan, believe in a bush spirit, Pe Tum Moi. Anyone who goes into the bush, especially to fetch water or firewood, has to be wary of him, because in the daytime this spirit changes into a frog, which, if it is put in a cage, disappears during the night. It is said that Pe Tum Moi commonly appears to human beings in the shape of a tiger that devours men and horses.

776 I discovered a pair of spirits that appear only at the birth
[844] of a child. Corresponding to the fact that this pair only has a joint effect, it also has only a joint name: me yĕn.

The spirit sŭ kăn is able to increase money and property.
[778] Many Meau and all shamans erect a small altar for him in their
[756] houses. In addition to the helpful spirits already mentioned, there are a great many of them for the most varied spheres. What superhuman capacities these spirits have over and above the familiar activity, however, is unknown to the people. Individual spirits for individual persons are in any case in the minority, and there are no tutelary spirits that have to attend to a single person, so to speak.

[753] Lajonquière (1) writes of "evil spirits that may enter the

II, p. 313.

human body in order to cause sickness. They live in the interior of the earth. They are the souls of the beheaded or of the unburied dead." In Thailand I was unable to find confirmation of
[177] this conception, which can probably be traced back to Chinese
[829] influence. I discovered in general that the Meau in Thailand

/168 cont./

231 776 If a village is plagued by many sicknesses, the Meau erect a symbolic gate out of three crossbeams about 40 or 50 meters from the village on the path leading to their settlement. Here [731] the dog is hanged, and it is assumed that henceforth, as a [789] guardian spirit, it will seek to prevent evil spirits from treading the paths that lead into the village. The same procedure is [243] followed before laying out a new rice field.

[764 775] In addition the Meau practice in different ways the custom of killing a dog when a human being dies; as a spirit it is supposed to guide the soul of the deceased into the other world.

776 My informant explained to me that over this whole host of spirits there stands only one spirit to whom they all, even the ancestors, are subject, "as to a king." He is invisible like all the other spirits, but in contrast to the latter he does not have human form, and lives simultaneously in heaven and in the earth, he is omnipresent. This chief spirit or, if one prefers, "high god" of the Meau, is bisexual, that is, male and female at the same time. He is the "Father and Mother spirit" of the Meau, who call him nă thu pen dọ nă thu /169/ pẹ̆ dŏ. Savina (1) [114 775]

1. II, p. 243.

gives his name as Ndo Chu or Chu Lau and maintains that this chief spirit, according to Meau belief, created the world. I was unable to find any confirmation for this notion, however.

It is not his affair to determine birth and death, but he is turned to when especially important reasons come up, for instance, when evil spirits are to be fought, and therefore especially in the case of epidemics and similar events. The animals [731 825 224] of the forest are likewise under the jurisdiction of the high Father-Mother spirit. Therefore, the hunters must turn to him with their request for rich booty.

[773] The Meau told me that human beings do not know who created the world (concerning the legends about this, see the chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales"). They also do not know who [821 626] makes lightning and thunder and do not have any clear conception as to the origin of these natural phenomena. They presume, however, that they are linked with the actions of the

/189 cont./

787 [756] The Meau ascribe extraordinary importance to various omens, whose number is almost legion. There are many omens that only the shaman knows how to interpret, while a great number is known to every Meau and he can interpret them himself and act accordingly. For example a field is abandoned if bad [241] omens appear, an /190/ accident occurs, or the crop fails, since one concludes from this that evil spirits are in it.

243 787 When a rice field is laid out, a person must be specially careful, and he does not by any means limit himself to the sacrificial festivals for the protective spirits described above, since the welfare of a Meau community depends upon the yield from the fields. The Meau live on the field products and the [433] booty from hunting; their dwellings and villages stand in the midst of forest areas. Hence it is not surprising that the behavior and the presence or the absence of various animals are believed [825] to be omens. In the search for a suitable location no muntjac may be seen or heard. If this obstacle is met successfully, it may still happen that when the first tree is felled, a turtle or a snake appears. In that case only swift flight can save one, for it means [776] that the dwelling of a spirit has been destroyed.

342 787 825 The omens which have to be heeded when a house is built are equally numerous. One may neither see a snake nor hear the "shriek" of a muntjac. Even the cry of a black squirrel is a bad omen. If none of these bad omens were noticed and if no bird dropped his excrement on the site chosen, the house and its occupants will be blessed.

224 787 825 In view of all this, it is self-evident that the Meau hunters, too, have absolute faith in the omens with which they are familiar. If one sets out to hunt and sees a snake or a muntjac, the undertaking is immediately called off. If one nevertheless wanted to proceed to hunt, he must expect to be killed by a wounded buffalo or elephant.

The muntjac plays an important and always unfavorable role. Merely its "shriek" is enough; the hunter who hears it believes that he cannot expect to bag any game.

/190 cont./

224 If the hunter tracks a wounded animal and, while camping
787 at night, hears the cry of the large black squirrel, he assumes
825 that the game has died in the meantime. If a spider spins its web over the place of a hunter's fire, he infers from this that he will soon bag some game.

787 It is regarded as a bad omen when a bird alights in a camp
825 /191/ set up in the jungle. If the bird should perch on the tree under which one is resting and if, in addition, he is hit by its droppings, this is regarded as the most unfavorable omen imaginable. Strangely enough, omens are not linked with the conspicuous and common hornbill, whose plaintive call astonishes every stranger, even if he has not yet seen the grotesque appearance of the bird, and which plays an especially important role among head-hunting peoples. Monkeys, lizards, frogs, and fish likewise have little significance among the Meau, and heavenly [821] phenomena, too, are not connected with omens. Similarly there
754 are no practitioners of black magic among the Meau, although
829 the concept is generally known. For instance, it is believed that among the neighboring peoples in the valleys, especially among the Chinese and Lao, such magicians who are able to do harm to human beings are very common.

787 The art of soothsaying is also known to the Meau. The belief is that it is neither inheritable nor can it be taught, but that it simply depends on the will of the spirits which person is endowed with this faculty. And there is no means by which the will of the spirits can be influenced in this respect.

Great importance is ascribed to dreams since it is assumed -- as has been said -- that in sleep the soul goes wandering and therefore dreams are nothing but the experiences of the soul while a person is asleep. The interpretation of dreams is also the [756] business of the shaman, but, as in the case of omens, there are some dreams, too, that every Meau interprets in the same way.

In general it is assumed that one's parents will die if he [763] dreams that he is losing his teeth. In this connection it is [171] interesting to note that the idea of a sinister meaning of a dream in which teeth play a role is also found among the Lao and Chinese, as well as in Europe.

/212 cont./

784 One of the taboos of the Meau is that it is inadvisable to
262 set foot in places inhabited by spirits. It is expressly forbidden
[776] to eat the meat of the large black squirrel. Anyone who violates this taboo will die immediately, according to the belief of the Meau. Lajonquière (1) speaks of a prohibition against eating horse

1. II, p. 303.

meat. There is no such taboo among the Meau in Thailand. To
[231] be sure, the Meau investigated by me did not raise any horses
[782] at all. In answer to my question, however, I was told that as a rule horses are not used as sacrificial animals and are eaten only in exceptional cases, because horses are too rare and therefore too valuable to be slaughtered.

272 Furthermore, among the taboos there is the prohibition
784 against ever drinking the milk of any animal. I was shown how
● 825 strictly every taboo is generally observed by an incident that I
123 experienced, because in the course of time I had made such a name for myself among the Meau as a doctor that people came to me from afar in order to have me treat them or give them medicine. Among those who came to me seeking to be cured, there was a Meau mother who did not have enough milk for her baby. The child, about two months old, was already starved, and /213/ all the Meau, including the mother, were aware of this. In spite of many proofs of their confidence in me and in spite of the almost incredible love of the Meau for their children, I did not succeed in persuading the Meau to permit me to give the baby cow's milk. Even the child's mother could not be persuaded, although there was a milk cow available and I made it quite clear that the baby was otherwise doomed to certain death. The child did soon die of undernourishment.

123 On another occasion I found the wife of a chief among my
262 patients. She asked me to examine her and was convinced that
[846] she suffered from an abdominal ailment, for, as she told me,
[164] full of remorse, she had violated the taboo that women in childbed are forbidden to eat meat for one month after the
[626] birth of the child. She now believed that the spirits were punishing her for the transgression. An examination of this sick

/224 cont./

539 was beautiful and yielded fruits without labor. It was covered with flowers as large as baskets. The Lord created ten suns and nine moons and many stars. The people regarded the stars as luminous stones and feared that they would fall down and kill them. They therefore asked the Lord of Heaven to remove them. This he did not do; instead he spread a tremendous blue veil over the earth in order to protect the people against the falling of the stars. The suns were female, and the moons male. The Lord gave them a soul and blew breath into them. For seven years they dried out the earth, and during this period it was always day; there was no night. Then the Lord created the plants, the animals, and, finally, human beings. At the same time, he created forests in the moon. The trees grew in large flooded plains. The people took the tops of the fallen trees and made arrows out of them, with which they shot at the suns and the moons. Nine suns and eight moons were extinguished. One sun and one moon fled and concealed themselves; during this period eternal night prevailed. For seven years the people lived in darkness; then they asked the sun and the moon to return. They would not, however. The tiger, too, begged in vain. After seven years they appeared again, after the seventh [825] crowing of the cock. Since that time cocks wear a comb as a reward."

The Meau in Thailand similarly told me that formerly there were many suns and moons on the firmament, that the stars arose from the union of the male moons and the female suns, and, furthermore, that the suns and the moons had died in the course of time. /225/ The other statements given by Savina are unknown to the Meau in Thailand.

Then I was told about an earlier age of happiness. The description coincides almost literally with that given by Savina (1):

1. II, p. 180.

/431 cont./

805 114 At any rate, I cannot agree with Savina (4), who writes

4. II, p. 176.

as follows concerning the time reckoning of the Meau: "Do not ask a Meau for a fixed date; he does not know any, not even the day of his birth." Nor was I able to find confirmation for the Chinese assertion that the Meau recognize the seasons of the year, summer and winter. This may be different, however, among the Meau who inhabit the cold northern regions.

805 [527] I was also able to ascertain that the Meau do not have a division of the week, but to make up for that regard the twelfth day after every full moon as /432/ a holiday. On this day, they stay at home, take a rest from their work, and, as a sign of the [778] day of rest, put in front of every house entrance a sacral sign in honor of the spirits (Ill. 97). ½ For the Meau of northern Thailand, the observation by Savina (1) that they use the growth

1. II, p. 205.

of plants and the voices of birds as aids for their division of [825] time is very pertinent: "The Meau keep roosters that crow at night. They do not ask how late it is, but rather how many times the cock has crowed. In the morning the women get up [221] at the third crowing." The same author (2) continues: "All

2. II, p. 220.

[824] tasks begin at the same time every year. The Meau do not use any calendar for this, but rely on certain trees and shrubs that [825] bloom regularly at the same time every year. The first singing of the cuckoo is observed throughout the land. 'When the cuckoo sang last year, the maize was higher or lower than it is this year,' they say."

½ [See dat 116, p 663- ANALYST]